

When you are cooped up in the house because of snow and ice you have a lot of time to sit and think. As I sat waiting for my Alma Mater to play for the BCS National Championship, I thought about some 21st Century skills and web 2.0 tools that have made their way to my classroom through the years. I wanted to focus on the things that became a permanent part of classroom, the good ideas that I let get away, and the things that were outgrown or improved.

1. Book Adventure: The first web tool that I ever used was Book Adventure. Book Adventure is a FREE reading motivation program for children in grades K-8. Children create their own book lists from over 7,000 recommended titles, take multiple choice quizzes on the books they've read, and earn points and prizes for their literary successes. Book Adventure was created by and is maintained by Sylvan Learning. <http://www.bookadventure.com/>

2. Blogging: Although I have used many different formats and the use has evolved through the years, blogging is something that I don't see leaving my class anytime soon. Some great blogging tools can be found at www.edublogs.org, www.blogger.com, and www.kidblog.org. I have found that this is the easiest way to share real world writing with an audience.

3. Scratch: I love finding something that my students have fun and learn things without realizing they are learning. Scratch is a programming language that makes it easy to create your own interactive stories, animations, games, music, and art -- and share your creations on the web. As young people create and share Scratch projects, they learn important mathematical and computational ideas, while also learning to think creatively, reason systematically, and work collaboratively. <http://scratch.mit.edu/>

4. Video: Every time my class has produced a video we've had a great time and learned a lot of information. Producing videos is very time consuming but it is well worth your time even if it only one or two a year. Here is a blog post from one of my favorite teaching sites.

http://blogs.scholastic.com/top_teaching/2010/01/movie-making.html

5. Old School: Raise your hand if you remember monochrome monitors and 5 ¼ floppies. Was Oregon Trail one of your favorite games? Virtual Apple 2 has a place where you can play Oregon Trail plus many other old Apple games. Have fun walking down this memory lane.

<http://www.virtualapple.org/>

Have a great weekend!

